

Tips for Fuel Efficiency

Rising gas prices have us all fuming at the pump. By using some of the tips listed here, you can save money by increasing fuel efficiency.

When Gassing Up:

- Choose the right octane gas for your car. Check the owner's manual to find out what octane your engine needs. Only about 6 percent of the cars sold in the U.S. need premium gas.
- Avoid topping off your gas tank. In warm weather, fuel expansion can cause an overflow.

Before Heading Out:

- Let your car warm up for a minute (but no more than a minute). A warm engine is more fuel efficient than a cold one. Idling for too long wastes fuel.
- Keep your tires inflated to the proper level. Properly inflated tires provide less road-resistance and can improve fuel efficiency by 3 to 5 percent. It can also increase the life of your tires. Check your owner's manual for appropriate inflation levels. This information may also be available on the jamb of the driver's side door.
- Watch for tread wear by checking the wear patterns and tread levels frequently. Have the tires rotated at least every 10,000 miles. Keeping your car properly aligned can also reduce your fuel bill by 2 percent and extend the life of your tires.
- Keep up with engine maintenance. Make sure that you change the spark plugs and filters according to the manufacturer recommendations. A properly tuned car can increase its gas mileage by 6 percent and reduce harmful car emissions.
- Avoid packing items on top of the car. A loaded roof rack or carrier creates wind resistance and can decrease fuel economy by 5 percent.
- Lighten your load. An extra 100 pounds in the trunk reduces a typical car's fuel economy by 1 to 2 percent.

While On The Road:

- Stay within posted speed limits. Driving at high speeds, especially for long distances, uses more gasoline. Each 5 miles per hour (mph) you drive over 60 mph reduces fuel efficiency by about 10 percent.
- Use cruise control. It helps maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, helps reduce fuel use.
- Avoid "jack-rabbit" starts and stops.
- Use overdrive gears when on the highway. Overdrive decreases the car's engine speed, reducing fuel consumption and engine wear.
- Combine errands to avoid making several short trips. Short trips of 5 miles or less can decrease fuel efficiency.
- Car pool, van pool, walk or ride a bike when possible.

Your Next Vehicle:

- Car manufacturers are developing models that get better gas mileage and have very low emissions. Evaluate your transportation needs and then research your options to find a car that will save you money and keep the air cleaner.